

Greek-Americans have enriched our country enormously, in every profession, in every region, in every walk of life. Cities across America take their names from such places as Athens and Corinth and Delphi and Sparta.

And of course, our country would not exist if the ancient Greek city-states had not developed the world's most revolutionary idea—democracy. Our founding fathers studied history closely and revered deeply the works of the ancient Greeks. Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, once observed, "Greece was the first of civilized nations, presenting examples of what man should be."

Although democracy is a significant common value that strengthens the bond between the United States and Greece, we must realize there is more to this relationship. Greece's major role in World War II provided tremendous setbacks to the Axis offensive. Furthermore, Greece remained an important ally throughout the Cold War and the struggle to promote our democratic values around the globe.

Today, the United States and Greece are leaders in the pursuit to promote democracy, human rights, freedom, and peace. President Clinton referred to Greece as "a beacon of democracy, a regional leader for stability, prosperity and freedom."

Greece has been a friend and ally for more than the last century and we will stand by her to peacefully resolve the situation in Cyprus and other challenges that the twenty-first century may bring.

So today, I am proud to join with Greek Americans and the Greek people in celebration of Greek Independence Day, reaffirming the democratic principles from which our two nations were born and which have shaped our world. America and Greece have special responsibilities in this quest—the United States as the world's strongest democracy, Greece as the world's first. But if we engage fully in the changing world beyond our borders, we can build a future in which all nations enjoy prosperity, democracy, and peace.

Mr. COYNE. Madam Speaker, I am honored today to join in this special order commemorating the 180th anniversary of Greece's independence from the Ottoman Empire.

180 years ago, in 1831, Greek patriots rose up against their Ottoman overlords in a long and bloody revolution that lasted nearly eight years. The cause of Greek independence required great courage, perseverance and sacrifice. The Greek people experienced frequent adversity and hardships, but their struggle continued. Many brave men and women lost their lives in this fight, and freedom was not won without considerable cost. In the end, however, the Greek people never wavered in their struggle for freedom, and the land that was once the cradle of democracy was again free.

This day is very special to the people of America because Greece and the United States have much in common. Our shared democratic ideals have formed a basis for a strong and sustained friendship. Furthermore, the writings of early Greek philosophers like Plato and Polybius were adopted by many patriots of the American Revolution, who used their words as inspiration. Even today, Greece remains one of our most loyal partners and democratic allies in the global community.

In recognition of this historic event, the House has repeatedly observed this annual

commemoration of Greek independence. Recently, the Senate passed a resolution designating March 25, 2001, as "Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American democracy".

Madam Speaker, it is only appropriate that we recognize these Greek patriots who shed blood for the same principles of freedom and self-government that inspired the patriots of our own revolution here in America. Consequently, it is appropriate that all of us, as Americans, share in the celebration of this momentous occasion. I am honored to join my colleagues in commemorating the 180th anniversary of Greek independence.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 180th Anniversary of Greek Independence Day. The annual celebration commemorates the day the Greek people took up arms against the Ottoman Empire in 1821. And today, it stands as the defining moment in the establishment and preservation of modern democratic ideals espoused by Greek society.

The Greek and American people share a common heritage that cannot be overlooked. The foundation of America's democracy is based on the democratic principles established by the ancient Greeks. The political and philosophical beliefs of the ancient Greeks enabled our Founding Fathers to craft a Constitution and to establish a government that holds high the ideals of equality and justice. During its struggle for independence, Greece looked to the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution for inspiration.

The annual Greek Independence Day parade will be held on Sunday, March 25, 2001. On that day, the streets of New York City will overflow with the pride and passion of the Greek-American community. Greek Independence Day is not only significant because it marks the beginning of the liberation of Greece from Ottoman rule, but also because it presents an opportunity for all Greek-Americans to reflect on the important economic and cultural contributions their community has made to American society.

It is especially comforting to see the support and guidance that the National Coordinated Effort of Hellenes and the Federation of Hellenic Societies, as well as other Greek-American organizations provide their community members—ensuring that past accomplishments are celebrated and commemorated, while also ensuring future success by providing opportunities for advancement in education and the workplace.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Greek Independence Day and the common democratic heritage of Greeks and Americans.

Mr. WAXMAN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in celebrating 180 years of Greek Independence.

March 25, the official Greek independence day, is a proud day for Greeks across the world. It is a powerful reminder of the strength and determination inspired by the ideals of freedom and self governance, and an important opportunity for Congress to rise and recognize the shared values and goals between Greece and the United States.

Greece is a remarkable country with an exceptional past and a tremendous future. Its proud heritage as the ancient founder of democracy has evolved with great accomplishments like the war of independence, membership in NATO, and partnership in the European Union.

I join my colleagues in recognition of this special occasion and the strong U.S.-Greece relationship. The ties between our two countries are underscored by strategic economic, military, and diplomatic ties, and are continually enhanced by the activism of vibrant Hellenic-American communities across the United States.

HONORING THE 180TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. TIERNEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIERNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today and join my colleagues who spoke just prior to me in honor of the 180th anniversary of the Greek independence. As a Member of the congressional caucus on Hellenic issues, I once again join those colleagues and others in paying tribute to the nation of Greece and its people.

As we all know, as was so eloquently put forth by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), ancient Greece was the fountain of democratic ideals and values for the rest of the world, and her modern counterpart has been steadfast in ensuring that the philosophic traditions of the past are actively practiced.

Today, we celebrate the triumph of the ideal of self-government in recognizing the achievements of the Greeks who so valiantly fought for independence. We also recognize the debt of gratitude that the citizens of the United States and many other nations owe for the ideals upon which the American democratic experiment is based.

Greece, at the juncture between continents, continues to be actively involved in the international community, maintaining excellent relations with the United States, Europe and other nations. We all remember the recent response to the devastating earthquake in Turkey as an example of the commitment of goodwill that the Greek people continually demonstrate. It is my hope that this spirit of rising above differences will serve to inspire other nations as we move forward into the 21st century.

On behalf of the people of the 6th Congressional District of Massachusetts, I wish to extend congratulations to the people of Greece and all of the people of Greek heritage in the United States on this important holiday.

I am honored to have been selected to be an honorary grand marshal in this year's independence day parade in Boston. I look forward in sharing in the celebration once again with my constituents. It is my hope that the new millennium will bring forth many more years of positive and productive relations between the United States and Greece.

LESSONS OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMMONS. Madam Speaker, I stand here today in a Chamber that has for centuries witnessed on a daily basis the dreams and the fruits of American independence. Today, we remember that it was March 25, 1821, that the Greeks rose up to seek their independence. As has always been the case, the price of that independence was high.

Greek independence is a matter of special interest to me because of my family and, in particular, my wife, Heidi. My wife, Heidi, is the great, great granddaughter of a young 4-year-old survivor of the Battle of Missolongi. For those of my colleagues who recall those events, it was Missolongi that rose up against Ottoman rule. It was Missolongi that captured the attention of Lord Byron, and it was Missolongi where some of the harshest battles of Greek independence were fought.

When Missolongi finally fell, the survivors numbered only a few thousand women and children, one of them the 4-year-old great, great grandmother of my wife, Catherine, or Haidine, "the forsaken one," as she was known. She was impressed into the household of an Egyptian admiral and relocated to Alexandria, Egypt, where 3 years later, at the age of 7, she came to the attention of a British diplomat. The British diplomat offered to buy her out of slavery, but the offer was refused, until a few months later, she became sick, at which point the offer was accepted and the sick little girl was delivered to the diplomat's family. He and his wife nursed her back to health, they relocated to England where she was adopted, educated, raised up, and eventually married to the son of an admiral. They relocated to Canada and eventually to the United States.

So, Madam Speaker, the story of Greek independence is also the story of America and of Americans and of our families. It is a story of the struggle for freedom, the struggle for democracy, and the struggle for a better life for our families, our friends, and our neighbors.

As we gather in this great Chamber, this cradle of democracy here in these United States, we should never forget the lessons of Greeks and the lessons of Greek independence.

CELEBRATING 180 YEARS OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FERGUSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, on March 25, as has been mentioned, Greece celebrates its 180th year of inde-

pendence. I am here tonight to praise the society that represents, in a historical sense, the origins of what we call Western culture and, in a contemporary sense, one of the staunchest defenders of Western society and values. There are many of us in Congress, on both sides of the spectrum, who are staunchly committed to strengthening and preserving the ties between the Greek and American people. I would particularly like to thank the co-chairs of our Hellenic Caucus, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), for their fine leadership and tireless efforts to strengthen the ties between our two countries.

Just 2 years ago, after the Greek people began the revolution that would lead to their freedom, one of our predecessors in this Chamber, Congressman Daniel Webster, referring to the 400 years during which the Greeks were ruled by the Ottoman Empire, observed, and I quote, "These people," the Greeks, "a people of intelligence, ingenuity, refinement, spirit and enterprise, have been for centuries under the atrocious and unparalleled Tartarian barbarism that ever oppressed the human race."

The words Congressman Webster chose then to describe the Greek people, intelligence, ingenuity, refinement, spirit and enterprise, are as apt today as they ever have been. In the years sense, Americans and Greeks have grown ever closer, bound by ties of strategic and military alliance, common values of democracy, individual freedom, human rights, and close personal friendship.

In the early 20th century, Greece stood by the United States in World War I when Hitler's war machine decimated Europe in the middle of this century. Greece again stood on the same side of the United States to repulse the greatest threat to freedom and human decency the world as ever seen and, I might add, at great cost to the Greek people and the Greek nation.

□ 1900

History has shown that the historic battle of Crete, in which the indomitable spirit of the Greek people forced Hitler to delay his planned invasion of Russia, was one of the most important battles of the Second World War. From the outset of that war, Greece showed its true character as a nation of courage and honor, devoted to freedom and self-determination.

World War II's aftermath left Europe mired in the Cold War; and Greece, a NATO ally to this day, once again answered the call. Greece showed its national valor and sense of historic mission, joining forces with the United States and preserving and protecting the freedoms enjoyed today by an unprecedented number of the world's people.

The qualities exhibited by the nation of Greece, Mr. Speaker, are a reflection of the strong character and values of

its individual citizens. The United States has been greatly enriched as many sons and daughters of Greece made a new life in America. They and their children and grandchildren have enriched our country in countless ways, contributing to our cultural, professional, commercial, academic and political life.

The timeless values of Greek culture have endured for centuries, indeed for millennia. As Daniel Webster noted, 400 years of control by the Ottoman Empire could not overcome the Greek people's determination to be free.

But I regret to say, Mr. Speaker, to this day the Greek people must battle against oppression. For almost 24 years now, Greece has stood firm in its determination to bring freedom and independence to the illegally occupied nation of Cyprus. Like their forefathers who were under the control of a hostile foreign power for four centuries, the Cypriot people hold fast in defiance of their Turkish aggressors with every confidence that they will again be a sovereign nation, and they will.

The United States must be on their side in both the fight to secure that freedom and the celebration to mark the day when it finally arrives.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to congratulate the Greek people for 180 years of independence and thank them for their contributions to American life.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FERGUSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to switch subjects for a moment to talk about another matter during this month of women's history. As the Republican chair of the Congressional Women's Caucus, I would like to take the opportunity to discuss an issue that affects thousands of women each year, violence against women.

There are two types of violence against women that need to be addressed: domestic violence and sexual assault. Scratch the surface of any of our Nation's most challenging social problems, from crime in the schools to gang violence and homelessness, and you are likely to find a root cause of domestic violence.

Law enforcement officials are reporting that domestic violence situations are among their most frequent calls. Judges find that children first seen in their courts as victims of domestic violence return later as adult criminal defendants. Schools are noticing that children with emotional problems often come from an environment where violence is the norm.

Violence begets violence, and we must break the cycle. We have begun to address the problem, but there is still much work to be done. Reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act